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PETER PARKER™ SPIDER-MAN®

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#27

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At a demonstration on Radiation, high school student PETER PARKER was bitten by an Irradiated Spider from which he gained the Arachnid's Incredible Abilities. When a burglar killed his beloved Uncle Ben, a grief-stricken Peter vowed to use his Great Powers in the service of his fellow man, because he learned an invaluable lesson: With Great Power must also come Great Responsibility. Stan Lee Presents:

PETER PARKER SPIDER-MAN

GETTING AHEAD

I READ THIS *BOOK* ONCE -- IT WAS CALLED "HOW TO GET AHEAD."

THE KEY TO SUCCESS, SAID THE AUTHOR, IS TO GET OUT OF BED WITH A *SMILE* -- THAT'S HALF THE BATTLE WON, APPARENTLY. THE *OTHER HALF* IS TO BE AN HONEST ENOUGH PERSON THAT YOU CAN FALL ASLEEP AGAIN AT THE END OF THE DAY.

ME, I'M AN HONEST GUY.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN I SLEEP WELL AT NIGHT.

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BUT WHY *SHOULD* I WHEN I'VE *LOST* EVERYTHING THAT WAS EVER IMPORTANT TO ME?

TIME CLATTERS BY LIKE A RUNAWAY *TRAIN* -- EVERY NEW DAY MEANS MARY JANE IS ONE DAY FURTHER *AWAY*.

EVEN SO, I STILL WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND IMAGINE I CAN SMELL HER PERFUME. I STILL CATCH MYSELF LAUGHING AT SOMETHING SHE'S JUST SAID, AND THEN REALIZE SHE'S NOT *HERE* ANYMORE.

SOMETIMES, WHEN I'M OUT ON PATROL, I'LL LOOK DOWN INTO THE CROWDS BELOW AND FIND MYSELF SEARCHING FOR *REDHEADS*.

"JUST MAYBE..." I'M THINKING. *"MAYBE SHE'S SOMEWHERE NEARBY. MAYBE TODAY'S THE DAY I TURN A CORNER AND FIND HER **STANDING** THERE."*

AND THEN I WONDER: WHAT IF SHE REALLY *WERE?*

SOMETHING'S HAPPENED... SOMETHING THAT'S MADE ME QUESTION *EVERYTHING*. I THINK THE GOBLIN HAS POISONED MY MIND.

I HAD HIM DOWN. I WAS GOING TO *FINISH* HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL. *"YOU'LL NEVER **BEAT** ME,"* I SHOUTED. *"YOU NEVER COULD, AND YOU NEVER **WILL**."*

HE SIMPLY LOOKED ME IN THE EYE AS IF HE FELT *SORRY* FOR ME. *"I JUST **DID**,"* HE SAID.

AND THE THING IS, I THINK HE WAS *RIGHT*.

BACK WHEN I HAD MJ, I USED TO WONDER WHY SHE HATED ME BEING SPIDER-MAN SO MUCH. I MEAN, IF SHE LOVED ME, I THOUGHT, WHY DIDN'T SHE ***SUPPORT*** WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO?

SURELY, IF SHE JUST ***THOUGHT*** ABOUT IT, SHE COULD'VE UNDERSTOOD WHY I NEEDED TO BE SPIDER-MAN.

BUT MAYBE SHE KNEW ALL ***ALONG*** WHAT THE GOBLIN WAS TRYING TO TELL ME... THAT THE LINES ARE BLURRING, AND I'M HEADING DOWN THE PATH OF NO RETURN.

MAYBE SHE WAS NEVER AFRAID THAT I WAS GOING TO LOSE MY ***LIFE*** -- MAYBE IT WAS THE DANGER THAT I WOULD LOSE ***MYSELF.***

MAYBE I SHOULD'VE GIVEN THIS GAME UP A LONG TIME AGO.

MAYBE TOMORROW.

-- OHMIGOD, DID ANYONE SEE WHAT HAPPENED? THERE WAS THIS HUGE FLASH OF *LIGHTNING* --

...IT WASN'T MY FAULT -- THE LIGHT CHANGED TO GREEN, I *SWEAR* IT DID!

NO WAY! *MY* LIGHT WAS GREEN --!

...A *BOMB*, OR SOMETHIN', OFFICER. NEXT THING I KNEW, THE GAS TANK *EXPLODED*...

BUZZAAP

HEY, *CHARLIE!* WE GOTTA GET THESE PEOPLE OUT AN' CORDON OFF THE AREA -- IT'S SOME KINDA ELECTRICAL *SURGE*, OR SOMETHIN', AND GET THE POWER COMPANY ON THE HORN, *OKAY?*

DON'T JUST STAND THERE -- *MOVE!*

YO, FELLAS! ANYTHING I CAN DO TO *HELP?*

FELLAS?

HMM... WHAT A ROUSING CHORUS OF INDIFFERENCE. I MUST BE LOSING MY *APPEAL* --

BWOOM

YOW!

MAN... WHAT IN THE NAME OF SAM HILL IS GOING *ON* AROUND HERE?

THEN I *SEE* IT, COMING FROM ABOVE. THE SOURCE OF THE ELECTRICAL SURGES SEEMS TO BE LOCALIZED AT THE MAIN SCREEN ABOVE THE SQUARE.

KOBRA KOLA

MY SENSES ARE TINGLING... THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO CUT OFF THE FLOW TO THE SCREEN...

...THAT POWER COUPLING!

NEWS STAND

WAAP

SENSES GOING INTO *OVERDRIVE* NOW. AIR'S FULL OF PLASMA AND IONIZED GASSES... THERE'S SOMETHING *WEIRD* ABOUT THE WAY THE ELECTRICITY'S COMING DOWN AROUND US.

I ♥ NY

THIS IS NO *ORDINARY* SURGE -- IF I REMEMBER MY HIGH SCHOOL PHYSICS CORRECTLY, THE ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE SHOULD WANT TO FOLLOW THE *PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE.*

THAT MEANS IT SHOULD BE HITTING THE METAL OBJECTS CLOSEST TO THE SOURCE OF THE SURGE.

IT SHOULD BE... BUT IT'S *NOT.* IT'S REACHING ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE STREET.

AS IF SOMEONE -- OR *SOMETHING* -- IS *GUIDING* IT.

C'MON YOU --

--HHAHH!

BLLT

BZZT BZZT BZZ

SPIDER-MAN I REQUIRE YOUR PRESENCE ....

NAW... THAT WAS YOUR *IMAGINATION,* SPIDEY. IT WAS JUST A TRICK OF THE LIGHT THAT HAPPENED TO LOOK LIKE...

...STROMM?

HIS NAME WAS ***MENDEL STROMM*** -- HE CALLED HIMSELF ***THE ROBOT MASTER,*** BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENICS WITH GOD COMPLEXES DO.

AN ERSTWHILE PARTNER OF MY OLD PAL, NORMAN OSBORN, HE ***WAS*** -- UNTIL OSBORN PERFORMED THE ULTIMATE HOSTILE TAKEOVER BY HAVING STROM COMMITTED TO THE SLAMMER.

TO PASS THE TIME AWAY WHILE HE WAS INSIDE, STROMM DEVELOPED A STRAIN OF FUNKY GADGETRY AND SOME PRETTY NIFTY ROBOTS -- ALL DESIGNED TO BLOW THINGS UP AND KILL PEOPLE. NICE ***GUY.***

I'VE RUN INTO HIM A NUMBER OF TIMES. HE'S A DANGEROUS PSYCHOTIC WITH LITTLE OR NO REGARD FOR HUMAN LIFE. AND AT THE BOTTOM OF HIS LIST -- JUST BELOW OSBORN -- IS YOURS TRULY.

"NATURALLY..."

KNOK KNOK

NOW, WHO ON EARTH COULD THAT BE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT--

-- OH, MY... IS THAT YOU, PETER?

HELLO, MISS SMITH.

WELL, WELL... A SIGNATURE VISIT FROM MY FAVORITE PUPIL. I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'D FORGOTTEN I EXISTED.

I'M NOT SURE IF THAT'S POSSIBLE. MY EARS ARE STILL RINGING FROM THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU.

DAPHNE SMITH -- AKA "*BOOMER*"-- WAS MY SCIENCE TEACHER IN TENTH GRADE, AND QUITE POSSIBLY THE KOOKIEST PERSON I EVER MET -- CERTAINLY ONE OF THE ***SMARTEST***.

SHE WAS A TOTAL ***NUT*** -- THE ONE PERSON WHO COULD BRING AN ENTIRE CLASS TO ITS KNEES WITH LAUGHTER, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME HOLDING ITS INTEREST. SHE HAD A UNIQUE METHOD OF TEACHING, WHICH SHE CALLED "*CREATING A SPARK.*"

ADVANCED LEVEL CHEMISTRY

"I COULD NEVER TELL IF THAT MEANT THE *FIGURATIVE* SPARK IN THE MINDS OF HER STUDENTS, OR IF IT REFERRED TO THE *HUGE* AND *DEAFENING EXPLOSIONS* THAT FREQUENTLY ROCKED HER CLASSROOM.

EITHER WAY, SHE ***REALLY*** KNEW HOW TO SHAKE THINGS UP. WHEN I WASN'T FEARING FOR MY SAFETY, I WAS TESTING THE COMBUSTIBILITY OF MY SURROUNDINGS IN NEW AND ALARMING WAYS.

SO, HOW HAVE YOU *BEEN*, MISS SMITH? BLOWN UP ANY FRESHMEN LATELY?

I'VE BEEN *WELL*, DEAR. MY, YOU *HAVE* FILLED OUT, HAVEN'T YOU? YOU USED TO BE SUCH A ***SKINNY*** LITTLE GEEK --

HEHH... *TOUCHÉ*. LISTEN, I WAS WONDERING IF YOU CAUGHT THE NEWS TONIGHT... ABOUT THOSE *ELECTRICAL SURGES* IN TIMES SQUARE?

I'M FREELANCING FOR THE BUGLE THESE DAYS AND I'VE BEEN TRYING MY HAND AT SOME ACTUAL REPORTING LATELY. I NEED TO BE *THOROUGH*--

AH, YES... THOSE CURIOUS SURGES. I DON'T KNOW IF YOU NOTICED, BUT THERE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY SURGES ***AT ALL,*** PETER.

THE AVAILABLE MACHINERY SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CARRY THE NECESSARY *CURRENT*, FOR ONE THING.

YEAH... I NOTICED THAT. I ALSO NOTICED HOW THE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT REMAINED ***INTACT***, DESPITE THE HIGH VOLTAGE THAT MUST'VE BEEN INVOLVED. IT SHOULD'VE BEEN ***FRIED***.

GOOD BOY -- YOU ALWAYS WERE AS SHARP AS A *TACK*, MISTER PARKER. IF I WERE TRYING TO FIND OUT HOW SUCH A THING WERE POSSIBLE, I'D LOOK AT THE *SOURCE* FIRST.

THOSE SURGES OF ELECTRICITY HAD TO COME FROM ***SOMEWHERE*** ON THE GRID. I'D IMAGINE THE ELECTRICITY COMPANY IS TRYING TO PINPOINT IT AS WE SPEAK.

YEAH, OKAY.

LISTEN, UH... I DON'T KNOW IF YOU *HEARD* ABOUT MARY JANE--

I ***DID*** HEAR WHAT HAPPENED, MY LOVE, I'M SO SORRY ABOUT YOUR WIFE... SHE ALWAYS WAS SUCH A *SWEET* KID...

I KNOW YOU MUST MISS HER VERY MUCH.

YEAH, I *DO*. FUNNY THING IS, I FEEL LIKE SHE'S STILL *HERE*, YOU KNOW? I REALIZE IT'S JUST BECAUSE I *WANT* HER TO BE. ALL MY FRIENDS KEEP TELLING ME IT'S TIME TO LET GO.

BUT I DON'T ***WANT*** TO.

THEN ***DON'T***.

AS THE DAY CONTINUES, REPORTS OF ELECTRICAL FAILURES HAVE BEEN COMING IN FROM AS FAR AS LONG ISLAND AND BRIDGEWATER, CONNECTICUT.

TO THIS HOUR, THERE HAVE BEEN INNUMERABLE TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS, AS ENTIRE NETWORKS OF SIGNALS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED.

THE GOVERNORS OF NEW YORK AND CONNECTICUT HAVE DECLARED A STATE OF EMERGENCY UNTIL THE :ZZKRT: PROBLEM CAN BE BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL.

IN THE MEANTIME, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE :SKRRKKTTZZ: ...ER COMPANY SAYS THAT :BZRTTZ: AND PIXILATED DISTURBANCES APPEARING AS A GHOSTLY FACE ON MANY TV SCREENS...

...IN WHAT ONE WITNESS DESCRIBED AS :SRKTTZ: BUT HAS BEEN RESCINDED. CABLE COMPANIES SERVING :ZZKRTTZ: NO CAUSE FOR ALARM...

NEWS

...AUTHORITIES ARE NOW ADVISING USERS OF ALL CREDIT CARD AND AUTOMATED BANKING MACHINES TO DISCONTINUE USE UNTIL THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL.

SO, THIS IS LEGAL... RIGHT, SHEA?

"FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT..." THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW, DUDE.

ADISON

BESIDES, THE WAY I SEE IT, YOU'RE JUST DOING YOUR CIVIC DUTY, RIGHT? AIN'T MY FAULT IF THE ELECTRIC COMPANY DON'T KNOW HOW TO PREVENT SOME INTERESTED THIRD PARTY FROM TAKING A LOOK AT THEIR LOCAL SERVER.

'COURSE, I SAID THAT WHEN THEY GOT ME FOR THE MICROSOFT HACK. I SHOULDA KEPT MY MOUTH SHUT, COME T'THINK OF IT...

FILE EDIT VIEW

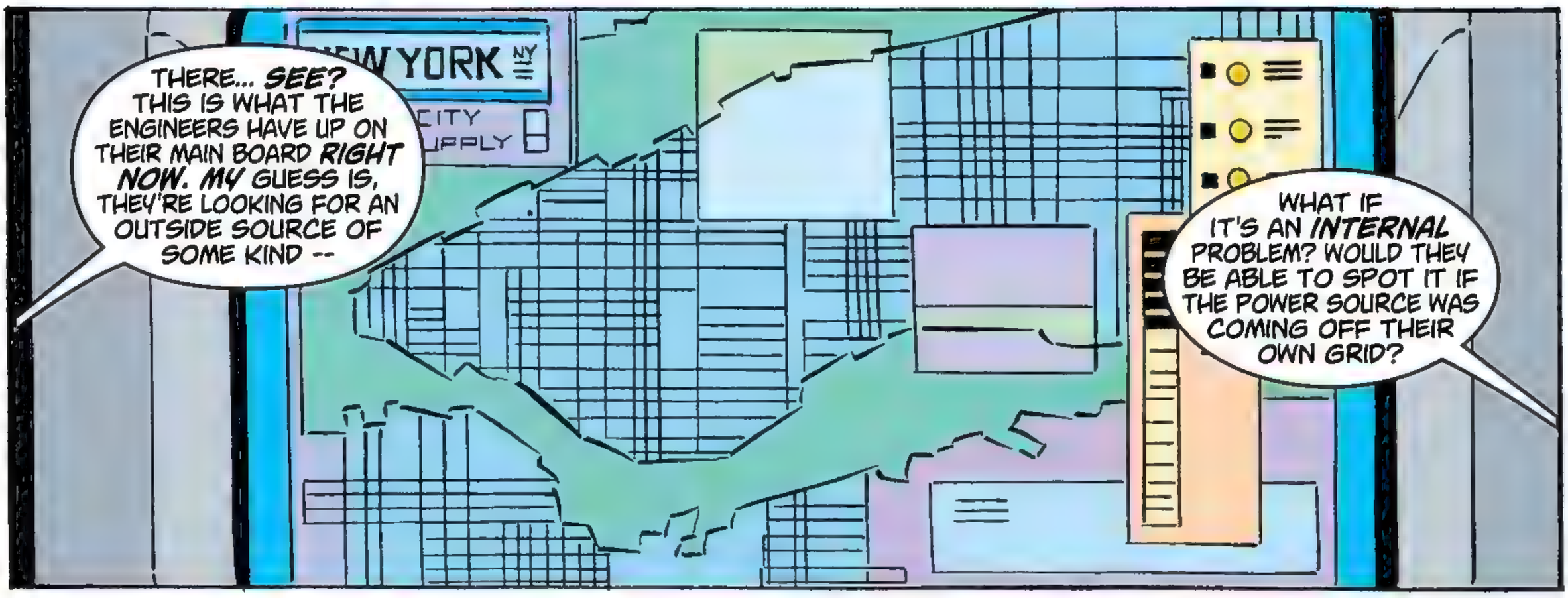
SEARCH INTERNET

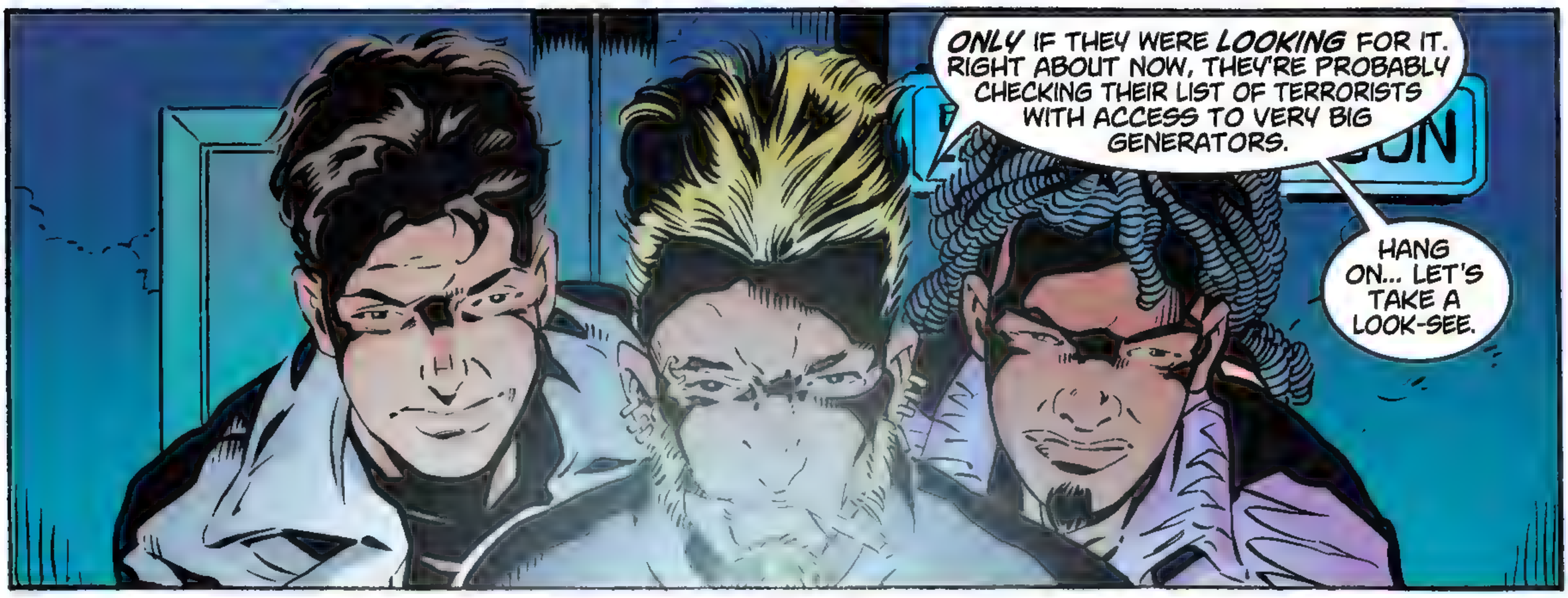
POWER GRID

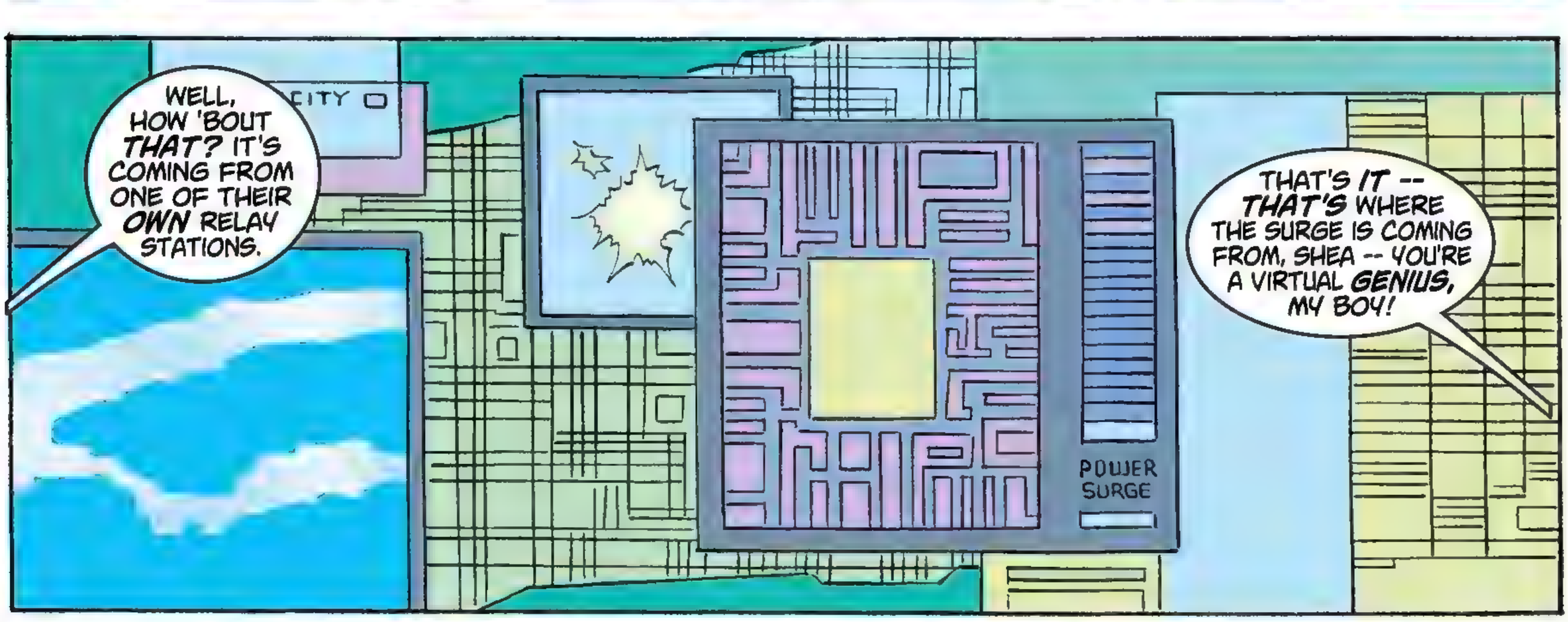
NEW YORK ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

OYEEYAM!

ET VOILA! ONE ELECTRICAL GRID, MONSIEUR... AN' WOULD YOU LIKE FRIES WITH THAT?


THERE... SEE? THIS IS WHAT THE ENGINEERS HAVE UP ON THEIR MAIN BOARD RIGHT NOW. MY GUESS IS, THEY'RE LOOKING FOR AN OUTSIDE SOURCE OF SOME KIND --
WHAT IF IT'S AN INTERNAL PROBLEM? WOULD THEY BE ABLE TO SPOT IT IF THE POWER SOURCE WAS COMING OFF THEIR OWN GRID?


ONLY IF THEY WERE LOOKING FOR IT. RIGHT ABOUT NOW, THEY'RE PROBABLY CHECKING THEIR LIST OF TERRORISTS WITH ACCESS TO VERY BIG GENERATORS.
HANG ON... LET'S TAKE A LOOK-SEE.


WELL, HOW 'BOUT THAT? IT'S COMING FROM ONE OF THEIR OWN RELAY STATIONS.
POWER SURGE
THAT'S IT -- THAT'S WHERE THE SURGE IS COMING FROM, SHEA -- YOU'RE A VIRTUAL GENIUS, MY BOY!

ANYTIME, DUDE. SAY, YOU VISITED THE I.R.S. WEBSITE LATELY -- ?
I'LL PASS. MAYBE NEXT TIME -- WHEN I WANT TO GO TO JAIL FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, OKAY?
SUIT YOURSELF.

THE RELAY STATION SHEA PINPOINTED ON THE NET. AT FIRST GLANCE, IT LOOKS PRETTY ORDINARY -- BUT I CAN'T SHAKE THE TERRIBLE FEELING THERE'S SOMETHING ***AMISS.***

MAYBE IT'S ALL THAT ELECTRICITY PLAYING HAVOC WITH MY SPIDER-SENSE. IF I LISTEN, I CAN HEAR THE BUS BARS HUMMING AWAY TO THE HORRIFIC TUNE OF FIFTY BAZILLION VOLTS.

THERE'S THAT SAME SMELL OF ***OZONE*** IN THE AIR, AND I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER IF THAT'S NORMAL, OR IF IT MEANS STROMM MIGHT BE ON THE PROWL HEREABOUTS.

I REALLY SHOULD HAVE PAID ATTENTION IN BOOMER'S SCIENCE CLASS INSTEAD OF MAKING ALL THOSE ***EXPLOSIONS*** --

UH-OH.

FZZAK

ZAAAB

OW! JEEZ... THEY'RE EVERYWHERE. I GOTTA FIND SOME --

--COVER!

CRUSH

UHH..!

SCIENCE WHIZ OR NOT, ONE THING IS CLEAR: I HAVE ABOUT TEN SECONDS BEFORE STROMM'S NEW ELECTRICAL TOYS BREAK IN AND TURN ME INTO SPIDER FRICASSEE.

AND THE ONLY WAY OUT SEEMS TO BE DOWN.

WELL WELL, ROBOT MASTER... HAVEN'T YOU BEEN A BUSY BOY --

YOO-HOO! ANYBODY HOME? MENDEL?

IT'S ME, YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SANTY CLAUS!

THE GOOFY BANTER IS AS MUCH TO COMFORT *MYSELF* AS TO ENGAGE IN ANY ACTUAL CONVERSATION. IF STROMM DID ANSWER ME AT A TIME LIKE THIS, I'D PROBABLY ***FREAK.***

I CAN'T HELP THINKING HOW IF THERE'S A WHITE RABBIT WITH A POCKET WATCH WAITING FOR ME AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS HOLE, I'M ***DEFINITELY*** GOING TO RETIRE.

THE TUNNEL EXTENDS AS FAR AS I CAN SEE. STRANGE... EVEN THOUGH MY SPIDER-SENSE IS STILL SCREAMING AT ME LIKE RATS PLAYING A VIOLIN, I *STILL* CAN'T SEE WHAT'S WRONG.

I DON'T FEEL STROMM'S PRESENCE AT ALL. IT'S THESE WEIRD CABLES -- THEY SEEM TO BE ORGANIC... ALMOST ***ALIV--***

GAH!

HEY, THAT'S REAL *FUNNY*, STROMM... ≥AH-HUHH≤ I'LL BET WE BOTH LAUGH ABOUT THIS SOME DAY--

RIGHT AFTER I KICK YOUR BUTT!!

YEAH... I'M TALKIN' TO *YOU*, BUDDY! WHAT... YOU GOT YOUR OWN CABLE SHOW NOW?

KTSCH

AWW... LOOK AT THAT -- ALL THE OLD GANG ARE HERE! AND SOME CUTE *NEW* KILLING MACHINES, TOO!

I'LL TELL YOU THIS, STROMM...HUFF..! YOU BETTER...

YOU BETTER'VE BEEN PRACTICING YOUR *KUNG FU*, OR SOMETHIN'. 'CAUSE WHEN I GET TO WHEREVER YOU ARE, I'M GONNA MAKE YOU EAT EVERY SINGLE *ONE* OF THESE BLASTED ROBOTS.

HH-AHH!, HUFF..! *GANGWAY!* TALLY *HO!*

OKAY, ROBOT MASTER... WHAT SAY WE MAKE THIS BETWEEN YOU AND ME, FACE TO--

--FACE..?

SPIDER-MAN... PLEASE...

...HELP ME...